



# WOMAN'S AUXILIARY

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## TO THE CALIFORNIA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

### Volunteer Services

#### The "GEMS" Program

IT IS DIFFICULT to imagine what American life, minus its volunteers, would be like. All of us have been asked to accept responsibility to do volunteer work in some activity important to the health and welfare of our family, of our community, our state or nation. In an address to the Auxiliary, Dr. Edward J. McCormick said, "Every doctor's wife should have a wholesome desire to preserve our democracy and bring continually improved medical care to the American people." The health movement has its finest flowering in this country. Nowhere else in the world has it experienced such an extensive and diversified development. In fact, it has become a permanent and important part of our national health program.

As you know, the Woman's Auxiliary to the California Medical Association does a tremendous volunteer service in nurse recruitment, in the formation of Future Nurse Clubs and in the giving of scholarships; and our public relations projects cover many volunteer services. Recently our Auxiliaries have become interested in the "GEMS" program (good emergency mother substitutes).

Certainly to be a baby sitter is a big challenge. This training is a priceless possession. The National Safety Council is keenly aware of the many parents who hire teenagers for purposes of baby sitting. It felt that for the safety of the baby sitter, the children involved, the parents and the home, there should be a guide for the planning and executing of a community project on safety, with respect to baby sitting. Safety and child care are so interwoven that education on how to care for children must include education in safe practices. Furthermore, so many youngsters in their teens are

baby sitting that education must also be directed toward their protection. The formation of a baby sitters council or committee within the local Safety Council organization is basic. Working through existing groups such as the Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls, church youth groups and the P-TA can be of much benefit. All are interested in the welfare and safety of children; all welcome the opportunity to serve the community. Two of our county auxiliaries, Santa Clara and San Bernardino, have this program in operation; both counties feel that they are contributing greatly to the welfare of the community and are serving American medicine as well as providing a much needed service to their friends and neighbors.

The lessons for baby sitter "GEMS" are five in number, at least an hour long—and frequently longer because of group discussion. A packet from the National Safety Council has a suggested outline for a community course, and it covers child care, safety, first aid, what the parents expect, what the baby sitter expects, the prevention and care of accidental poisonings, dealing with aspiration of small articles, burns, and the preparation and serving of meals.

In order to have the course worth while, it must be conducted by persons who are experienced in this subject and who have a respected place in the community. The standards for passing the course are set high so that it is a challenge to the student.

Service to any organization means loyalty to principle and friends. With the "GEMS" program the auxiliary members show that we live what we preach and that we sustain and uphold the high standards of the medical profession.

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